directly to writing Moreover, my own experience between the years 1914 and 1919 of conditions of life not wholly dissimilar, showed that those on foreign service m small forces, whether as political officers or soldiers, occupied about a fifth of their leisure time in jests of the kind that I afterwards found in *The C Merry Tales,* another fifth in planning the agenda of their return to London, and the remainder m prying (and usually with some success) into the affairs of their superiors More things were bandied about a mess tent than were ever recorded m an official *communique* However, with much that is preserved in manuscript sources, one could only guess whether it was or was not a matter for talk When there is no check, the chronicler must follow his own instinct whether any particular item was likely to be generally known or discussed If I occasionally erred on the side of generosity, let it be forgiven

Actually, however, I was at some pains to verify the publicity of my news items , and in the *Second* and *Last Journals* I have from time to time noted evidence of confidential matters being publicly discussed It is clear that even the private letters which passed between the Earl of Essex and his enemies at Court were widely known and discussed

As the Journal progressed, the problems changed In the *First Journal* there were months when it was difficult to find any news at all I had therefore recorded, from Henslowe's *Dtary*, the performance of plays at the Rose Theatre week by week In the *Second Journal* there was

no loom for these weekly lists , for, as the years went on, the recoids were multiplied fivefold In the *Salisbury Papers,* to mention but one instance, the Calendar for the four years 1591-4 occupies 622 pages, over 4,000 pages are required for the years 1595-1602 Moreover the Sidney papers, Chamberlain's letters, and the State Papers, Ireland, all began to yield new sources of information So much material remains that for some months during the last eight years of Queen Elizabeth's reign it would be possible to compile a daily newspaper